Compensatory Afforestation Management and Planning Authority Bill

2687. SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE:
SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Cabinet has discussed the Compensatory Afforestation Management and Planning Authority Bill, in its modified avtar in the month of March, 2008;

(b) if so, whether it would provide Government with more than Rs. 6,000 crore to use for afforestation under the 'Green India' project that Government had earlier announced;

(c) if so, by what time the proposed legislation in this regard is likely to be introduced; and

(d) to what extent it would be helpful?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) to (d) The note on creation of Compensatory Afforestation Fund (CAF) and Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) for promoting activities relating to afforestation through Green India has been approved by the Government. Accordingly, CAMPA will provide, initially, about Rs. 3,000 crore followed by Rs. 1000 crore per year for four years to part finance afforestation of 6 million hectares of degraded forest land in two phases in the country under Green India Programme. The legislation constituting the Compensatory Afforestation Fund (CAF) is planned to be introduced during the current Session of the Parliament.

Land for Sabari Mala Pilgrims

2688. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) to make a major breakthrough of the problems faced by the devotees of Lord Ayyappa at Sabari Mala, Forest and Environment Department has to spare a sizeable extent of forest land for this purpose, enhancing the basic needs of devotees;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Forest Department is reluctant to do so;

(c) the policy of Government in terms of preference when human life is in conflict with that of wild life and environment; and

(d) whether it is correct to say that the protection of human life and public interest is much more important and supreme than that of wildlife, ecology and environment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) to (d) To facilitate Sabari Mala pilgrimage visitation and to safeguard the interest of wildlife, a Master Plan was prepared by professionals, commissioned by the State Government with central assistance. Based on the same, Government of India has accorded clearance of diversion of forest land to the tune of 110.524 hectares at Nilakkal and 12.675 hectares in the Periyar Tiger Reserve, in addition to forest area already made available in this regard earlier by the State. This has been done with a view to address the sensitive human-wild animal interface, for taking care of the needs of pilgrims while safeguarding wildlife concerns.